

TOPIC: DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT: UNIVERSITY OF SAINT MARY – REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION AS A PLACE OF BUSINESS

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I. SUMMARY

This agenda item recommends authorization as a place of business (with no instruction) for the University of Saint Mary to operate an administrative office in Colorado pursuant to the Degree Authorization Act (C.R.S. §23-2-103.3).

II. BACKGROUND

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) has statutory responsibility for administration of Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, commonly referred to as the Degree Authorization Act. The Act sets out the terms by which the Commission may authorize accredited private colleges and universities, out-of-state public colleges and universities, and seminaries and bible colleges to operate in Colorado.

CCHE policy (Section I, Part J, section 3.04.01e) defines Authorization as a Place of Business (with no instruction) as institutions with a location in Colorado but that do not offer instruction from that location. Institutions that meet this definition must receive a formal exemption by the CCHE, annually renew the exemption, and report annual enrollment and degree completion data. The institution is subject to the deceptive trade practices provision of statute. However, such institutions are exempt from administrative procedures regarding accreditation and financial integrity requirements.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

University of Saint Mary (USM) is applying for authorization to operate a place of business, in the form of an administrative office, in Colorado. University of Saint Mary is a four-year Catholic liberal arts university founded by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth in 1923. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC), one of the six regional accreditors recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, awarded the institution accreditation in 1928 and it remains accredited by that agency as well as several programmatic accrediting agencies.

In May 2010, the University of Saint Mary entered into an agreement with John Wiley & Sons, Inc. for services related to USM's online programs. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. is primarily responsible for marketing, recruitment of students, and student support services for USM's

online programs. While the University of Saint Mary does not have a physical presence in the state, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. maintains a regional office in Denver.

As required by the Degree Authorization Act, the University of Saint Mary submitted the documentation concerning its organization, programs, and activities taking place in Colorado. Department staff determined that the activities University of Saint Mary described for the Colorado office do not necessitate full authorization to operate. Rather, the proposed activities meet the definition for the authorization of a place of business.

The definition for authorization as a place of business allows an institution to operate out of a Colorado office so long as the site does not offer instruction. Specifically, the online partner engages in activities that focus on:

- Marketing management of the online programs offered by USM
- Admissions counseling for recruitment and enrollment of students in the online programs
- Retention services to support USM students enrolled in online programs:
 - Orientation of new students
 - Appointed Wiley personnel to act as single point of contact for administrative services
 - Proactive contact with USM's online students
- Technical assistance in course design
- Management and governance of program services

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve authorization as a place of business for University of Saint Mary.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-2-103.3